

Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises ("Kegels") for Increased Pleasure and Sexual Health

Finding the Muscles

For most men the easiest way to begin to find and isolate the pelvic floor muscles is to notice what you do when you stop the stream of urine while peeing. The muscles you use to do this are some of the muscles you will be focusing on when you do pelvic floor exercises. If you use internal muscle contractions to squeeze out the last few drops of urine when you finish peeing it's good to pay attention to this, too.

It is important to learn to exercise the pelvic floor muscles without contracting your legs, your butt, or your belly/abdominal muscles.

For some men, finding the correct muscles to contract and can be challenging. To tighten your pelvic floor muscles, think of pulling your testicles up into your body. If you've ever had the experience of making your erect penis "jump" or bob or get harder by squeezing internal muscles then you already know how to use the muscles you'll use to do Kegels.

If you're contracting the correct muscles, your penis will rise when you tighten, and fall again when you relax your muscles. This is more noticeable when your penis is erect, but you should still be able to feel the movement when soft. If you watch the top surface of the base of your soft penis - where it enters your body under your pubic hair - you should see it move up toward your navel, and pull into your body slightly when you contract the correct muscles.

You may also be able to feel the subtle lifting of muscles in your perineum (the area between the scrotum and anus) by placing a hand there and then contracting. This is easiest to do lying on your side.

If you are unsure that you are contracting the correct muscles, or are not able to make the muscles respond, contact a Pelvic Floor Therapist who can teach you how to do this correctly and effectively.

There are tools available to help you do Kegel exercises. Some are also prostate massagers (like the Aneros), but anything that is designed for anal insertion, whether or not it stimulates the prostate, can help you feel and identify your pelvic floor muscles more easily. This allows you to strengthen more effectively, especially at first. Some men choose to use a tool, others feel confident exercising without tools. One way is not better than another; as long as you're doing the exercise as outlined below, you can do them however works best for you.

If you choose to use a tool, you'll also need some lubricant. Use only water-based lubricants if your tool is made of silicone, but any lubricant is fine with plastic and stainless steel. Many men prefer a thicker water-based or silicone lubricant to provide extra cushion for anal skin.

Step-by-Step Kegels

1. Lie down on your back in a comfortable place, with your knees bent. If you are using an exercise tool, coat it with lubricant, relax and gently insert it into your anus.
2. Contract your pelvic floor muscles. It will feel like you're pulling up and in toward your belly

button. DO NOT push out—imagine that you are pulling in your testicles. If you're using a tool, you should feel it rise a bit or, if it's curved, nudge your prostate. Try to keep your leg, buttock, and abdominal muscles relaxed, and remember to breathe normally throughout the exercise.

3. Hold the lift for a count of 5. Again, remember to breathe!
4. Relax your muscles. You may notice your penis moving as you tighten and release your pelvic floor muscles.
5. IMPORTANT: After each Kegel, take a deep belly breath. Inhale deeply then gently blow out the air while you relax your pelvis completely. This deep relaxation is just as important as the other steps, because the deep breath relaxes the muscles that are not under your conscious control.
6. Congratulations, you have just done one Kegel.

How many Kegels should I do every day?

Start out doing 2 sets of 5 twice a day, holding each for 5 seconds. Gradually increase the time until you can hold each contraction for 10 seconds. Next, increase the number you do each time until you can do 2 sets of 10, holding each for 10 seconds. It would go like this: contract and hold for 10 seconds (while breathing normally), and then relax for 10 seconds (while taking a deep belly breath). Then, repeat the sequence until you have completed 10 exercises. Next, rest for a few minutes and then do another set of 10 in the same way. Repeat this entire sequence again later in the day.

Important Points to Remember:

- • If you forget to do your exercises for a few days, don't fret—just get back to them when you can.
- • If you have any pain in your pelvis or genitals that feels worse when doing this, STOP, and contact your health care provider.
- • If there's no improvement in your symptoms after a month, contact a Pelvic Floor Therapist. It's not uncommon to think you're doing Kegels correctly but are actually contracting your buttock or abdominal muscles instead, or pushing out rather than pulling up. If you think this might be the case, a Pelvic Floor Therapist can help you do them correctly.

But I read I should do 100 Kegels really fast. Why do you recommend only 5-10?

The pelvic floor is made up of two kinds of muscle fibers: slow-twitch (70%) and fast-twitch (30%). Slow-twitch fibers respond best to slow, step-by-step engagement like we have described. If you only do fast ones, you are not strengthening the majority of the muscle fibers. So it's important to learn to do the “hold” as described above.

The other 30% of muscle fibers are important too, so once you're comfortable with the Kegel “hold”, you can learn “flicks.” To do these, tighten your pelvic floor muscles the same way as before but more quickly, then relax. The entire cycle should take about 3 seconds, and you should breathe normally and keep the rest of your body relaxed throughout. Do about 20 twice a day, and finish

each set with the deep belly-breath. Doing more would just overwork the muscles, and can lead to poor technique that compromises your progress or leads to other problems.

As with any exercise program it's good to vary your routine and avoid getting into a "rut". As long as you're not over-exercising it's a great idea to switch the types of exercise you do around, and to experiment. This will keep it interesting and fun for you, and your body will probably respond better to a changing routine.

Once I have my routine of two sets of 10 Kegel “holds” and 20 “flicks,” how should I progress from there?

If you began by using a tool, now is the time to learn to contract your pelvic floor muscles without the tool. Once you have mastered holding for 10 seconds without the tool and without involving your buttock or abdominal muscles while lying down, the next step is to do your exercises sitting up, and after that, standing. You can eventually build up to doing them while you do functional tasks like lifting, walking up stairs, jumping, etc. It's important to make sure you're able to contract and relax your pelvic floor muscles without involving other muscles in your body, and while breathing normally, so don't rush the process.

If you want to do more advanced exercises, you can add weight (resistance) while you do your exercises. Once you have mastered doing the exercises lying down, the next step is to use an anal tool and hold it with your hand and pull slightly outward on it at the same time as your muscles work to hold it in. Once you can hold for 10 seconds, still using good technique (not involving other muscles, remaining relaxed, breathing normally) you may try it while standing. Or try hanging a light towel over your erect penis while doing the exercises as another way of adding resistance. The weight of the towel can be increased over time. Another method is to use weighted anal tools, such as those made by Njoy, first lying down then standing, while allowing the weight of the tool to provide resistance.

The group of pelvic floor muscles is made up of 14 different muscles. With practice and focused attention you can begin to isolate different muscles or groups of muscles within the larger group. You could try to contract the muscles that make your penis move while not contracting your anal sphincter, or vice-versa. Experiment and play with yourself - all of these exercises can be fun and pleasurable, and will help to keep your "plumbing" in great shape throughout you life.

This how-to was prepared by Al Eingang of solosuck.com using personal experience and information from <http://www.awomanstouchonline.com/sex_counselor.php?articleID=3254>